

PATENT  
2666 CON (203-2709 CON)

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

APPLICANT: David C. Racenet et al.

CONTINUATION OF  
SERIAL NO.: 09/687,815

GROUP: To be assigned

FILED: Concurrently herewith

DATE: February 20, 2004

FOR: **SURGICAL STAPLING DEVICE**

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Dear Sir:

Prior to examination on the merits, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

Amendments to the Specification begin on Page 2 of this paper.

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 3 of this paper.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 4 of this paper.

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**CERTIFICATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.10**

I hereby certify that this Transmittal and the documents referred to as enclosed therein are being deposited with the United States Postal Service on this date February 20, 2004 in an envelope as "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" Mail Label No. EL 983568905 US addressed to: Mail Stop Patent Application, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Dated: February 20, 2004

Christopher G. Trainor  
Christopher G. Trainor